

A PUBLICATION OF THE PARTNERSHIP FOR THE NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM



# Pathways

## *Across America*

WINTER 2020-2021

## TRAIL HIGHLIGHTS

*2020 achievements  
by trail partners*

OUTREACH AND  
PUBLIC AWARENESS

RESOURCE PROTECTION  
AND TRAIL COMPLETION

CAPACITY  
BUILDING

# Pathways Across America

*Pathways Across America* is the only national publication devoted to the news and issues of America's national scenic and historic trails. It is published quarterly by the **Partnership for the National Trails System (PNTS)** under cooperative agreements with four Federal agencies.

**Department of Agriculture (USDA):**  
U.S. Forest Service (USFS)

**Department of the Interior (DOI):**  
National Park Service (NPS)  
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

**Department of Transportation (DOT):**  
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)



Unless otherwise indicated, all material in *Pathways Across America* is public domain. All views expressed herein are perspectives of individuals working on behalf of the National Trails System and do not necessarily represent the viewpoint of the Federal agencies.

## ABOUT US

The Partnership for the National Trails System (PNTS) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that connects member nonprofit trail organizations and Federal agency partners to further the protection, completion, and stewardship of the 30 National Scenic and Historic Trails within the National Trails System.

## STAFF

**Executive Director:** Valerie Rupp

### Contractors:

Mike Dawson, FHWA Cooperative Agreement Project Manager

John Lam, Communications

Don Owen, FHWA Cooperative Agreement Technical Contractor

Gary Werner, Special Projects

Liz Wessel, Fundraising and Special Projects

## EDITORIAL BOARD

Carin Farley • Bureau of Land Management

Christopher Douwes • Federal Highway Administration

Peter Bonsall • National Park Service

Crystal Salvador-Zapote • National Park Service

Brenda Yankoviak • U.S. Forest Service

## CONTACT

Partnership for the National Trails System  
1615 M St. NW, 2nd Floor • Washington, D.C. 20036  
202.963.2910 • [www.pnts.org](http://www.pnts.org) • [admin@pnts.org](mailto:admin@pnts.org)



## BUILDING COMMUNITY

# National Trails System

Congress passed the National Trails System Act, signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson on October 2, 1968. Today, the National Trails System is composed of 11 National Scenic Trails (NSTs), 19 National Historic Trails (NHTs), almost 1,300 National Recreation Trails (NRTs) including 21 National Water Trails, and more than 2,000 Rail Trails. These trails provide outdoor recreation opportunities, promote resource preservation and public access, and encourage the appreciation of the great outdoors and America's history and cultural diversity.

## PATHWAYS NATIONWIDE FOR DISCOVERY, LEARNING, AND UNDERSTANDING

**Strengthening communities** through heritage and ecotourism, public involvement, and community collaboration.

**Enhancing access** to natural areas and historic treasures through innovative interpretation and outreach efforts.

**Facilitating public-private partnerships** for preservation of history, natural environments, and human health through outdoor recreation.



### SCENIC AND HISTORIC TRAILS

- Authorized by Congress
- Stewardship facilitated by the nonprofit **Partnership for the National Trails System**
- Total 55,000 miles through 50 States and the District of Columbia in wild, rural, suburban, and urban areas, connecting with every distinct ecological area or biome in the country
- Connect and travel through 70 wildlife refuges, 80 national parks, 90 national forests, 100 BLM field office areas, over 120 wilderness areas, numerous State and local parks, trails, and other protected areas, and 100 major urban areas
- Over 1 million hours of volunteer labor to build and maintain annually

### RECREATION TRAILS

- Designated by Secretary of Interior or Secretary of Agriculture
  - Stewardship facilitated by the nonprofit **American Trails**
  - Total 28,000 miles through 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico
- [www.americantrails.org](http://www.americantrails.org)

### RAIL TRAILS

- Part of 1983 amendment to National Trails System Act
  - Stewardship facilitated by the nonprofit **Rails-to-Trails Conservancy**
  - Total 22,000 miles through 50 States and the District of Columbia, and 8,000 miles in progress
- [www.railstotrails.org](http://www.railstotrails.org)



Click the National Trails System tab to view a map and learn about our partners:

[www.pnts.org](http://www.pnts.org)



## KEEPING HISTORY ALIVE



## PRESERVING BIODIVERSITY

### 11 NATIONAL SCENIC TRAILS

The National Scenic Trails (NSTs) represent some of the most magnificent long-distance hiking trails anywhere in the world. Virtually every major ecosystem in the country is traversed by a NST, including deserts, temperate rainforests and deciduous forests, tundra, mountains, prairies, wetlands, and rivers. NSTs offer natural corridors for wildlife preservation and unspoiled views, and they create fitness and outdoor leadership opportunities for all ages.

- Appalachian NST
- Arizona NST
- Continental Divide NST
- Florida NST
- Ice Age NST
- Natchez Trace NST
- New England NST
- North Country NST
- Pacific Crest NST
- Pacific Northwest NST
- Potomac Heritage NST

### 19 NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAILS

The National Historic Trails (NHTs) may be foot or horse paths, travel routes, roadways, or a combination of several modes of travel designated as a route retracing a part of American history. Many NHTs have interpretive centers and regular events to immerse you in the past. While historic trails may run through urban and suburban settings, they also boast wilderness and hiking opportunities as beautiful and diverse as the NSTs.

- Ala Kahakai NHT
- California NHT
- Captain John Smith Chesapeake NHT
- El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro NHT
- El Camino Real de los Tejas NHT
- Iditarod NHT
- Juan Bautista de Anza NHT
- Lewis and Clark NHT
- Mormon Pioneer NHT
- Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) NHT
- Old Spanish NHT
- Oregon NHT
- Overmountain Victory NHT
- Pony Express NHT
- Santa Fe NHT
- Selma to Montgomery NHT
- Star-Spangled Banner NHT
- Trail of Tears NHT
- Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route NHT

### Cover Photographs

#### FRONT

Youth at work on the Arizona Trail. Photo Credit: Treven Hooker, ATA

#### INSIDE

Left: Arizona Trail. Photo Credit: DAN Photo

Center: Werowocomoco Ancestral Lands Corps Individual Placement Program: Ancestral Lands interns Connor Tuppe, a citizen of the Upper Mattaponi Indian Tribe of King William, Virginia (left), and Cheyenne "Chey" Sherwin, descendant of the Mikisew Cree First Nation of Alberta, Canada (right), perform curatorial work at Colonial National Historical Park. Photo Credit: NPS

Right: Gibraltar Rock Segment, IAT Photo Credit: Jo Ellarson

# Contents

WINTER 2020-2021



#### 4 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- 2020: "Six Feet Apart, But Closer Than Ever."



#### 5 COVID-19

- Reactions and Responses



#### 9 REFLECTIONS

- Teresa Martinez • Elena Mederas • Judy Bittner



#### 10 PNTS ANNUAL REPORT

- Financial Overview and 2020 Contributors

### 2020 Highlights



#### 6 • National Scenic Trails



#### 10 • Partnership for the National Trails System



#### 12 • National Historic Trails



#### 18 • Federal Agency Partners



#### 20 EVENTS AND RESOURCES



#### EDITOR'S NOTE:

This issue of *Pathways* provides a glimpse of the many great strides made by nonprofit trail partner organizations and Federal agency partners to support the National Trails System. The achievements represented in these pages, however, are by no means reflective of all that is taking place on the national scenic and historic trails. This report does not include many of the great achievements of the State, regional, and local public agencies, or many other private organizations that support the trails in a multitude of ways. Highlights have been edited for space and clarity.



View more highlights and photos from 2020:

[www.pnts.org/new/category/pathways/](http://www.pnts.org/new/category/pathways/)



# The National Trails System

## 2020: "Six Feet Apart, But Closer Than Ever."



Recently, I read an article that featured responses to a request for people to summarize 2020 in a word or a phrase. Contributions varied wildly, often reflecting the strain and uncertainty so many of us experienced in 2020. My favorite response was a phrase commonly used throughout the year, "six feet apart, but closer than ever". While some of the ensuing online comments dissented, noting social distancing, remote schooling, unrest and any number of other divisions, the message rang true for many others who noted spending more time with their families and banding together to face seemingly insurmountable challenges.

In so many ways, 2020 showed us the value of connections. Even as we physically distanced, we still found ways to remain in touch and to work and learn collaboratively.

The value of connection is at the core of Partnership for the National Trails System (PNTS). From our humble origins as a program linking a small group of trail organizations, PNTS has grown in membership and strength because it brings together trail advocates and leaders. It is a forum for collaboration and exchange, a resource, and a collective voice for National Scenic Trails and National Historic Trails.

In this issue of Pathways Across America, you'll see highlights that showcase the spirit and perseverance of the National Trails community. Despite a pandemic, devastating forest fires, abrupt changes to work norms and trail visitation, and any number of professional and personal challenges, you will hear stories of progress and innovation, and you'll see more than a few smiling faces. While this issue contains some examples of the ways our members and partners came together through PNTS, such as during Hike the Hill® or our first

virtual workshop, what is more difficult to capture is the culture of collaboration that I see daily as ideas and resources are shared, plans for collective action are made, and people go above and beyond their daily work to lend their time and expertise to individual trails and the National Trails System as a whole.

As we take this time to reflect in 2020, it is clear that the National Trails community is unstoppable. With National Trails in each state, the members and partners of PNTS may be far apart spatially, but we are strong because of our connections to one another.

All the best,



by John Lam, *Communications Contractor*  
*Partnership for the National Trails System*

When we made our plans for 2020, focusing on the challenges that lay before us, no one could have predicted that the greatest challenge of all would be operating in the midst of a once-in-a-century global pandemic. Covid-19 spread across the world and reached into our communities in a way many, if not most, of us had never experienced.



As we collected information for this issue of Pathways, we asked for a glimpse into how Covid-19 affected trail organizations, as well as their reactions to the pandemic.

Some trail partners, unfortunately, saw a near total shutdown of their organizations and activities. Many trail visitor centers around the U.S. closed due to Covid-19. While these closures affected all staff and trail users, it impacted different trails in different ways. For instance, it was particularly heartbreaking for many people along Selma to Montgomery NHT—unable to convene along trail assets created to commemorate the historic march—as they mourned the painful loss of Congressman John Lewis.

Activities and strategies paused as projects, carefully planned and funded, became postponed with a promise to revisit in 2021. Many volunteers ready to serve were forced to await a time when it was safe to again resume their work. Events were unable to move forward as initially conceived. Some were postponed, others cancelled. Some, thanks to technology many of us hadn't even considered prior to the pandemic, found new venues in virtual environments.

The reality of a public health crisis in which we're asked to remain at home is that it makes so many of us yearn for the outdoors. Many of our partners found their trails being used at record numbers.

Trail organization and partners noted the public health restrictions, due to the pandemic, resulted in park visitors searching for more ways to explore the outdoors. They quickly responded, providing creative ways to safely enable people to enjoy trails. For example, National Park Service shared that sites in the Southern Campaign of the American Revolution Parks Group worked together to ensure visitor safety while allowing them a chance to socially distance and explore. Many trails offered additional safety guidelines or training for hikers. Several trails introducing popular, virtual hike apps that converts one's daily walk into approximate steps taken on a trail so that over time, they may pass landmarks or even complete a virtual thru-hike.

Often, in the face of overwhelming challenges we find ourselves worried that we didn't react appropriately. Looking at all of these responses, however, one thing became clear. No matter the size of our organizations or the length of our trails, in the face of an unprecedented worldwide pandemic, we all did the exact same thing:

**We did our best.**

And the entire National Trails community is better for it.



See the online edition of this issue for Covid-19 comments from our Trail Organization and Federal Partners. Click the link below for Covid-19 resources and updates.

[www.pnts.org/new/covid-19-updates-for-national-scenic-and-historic-trails/](http://www.pnts.org/new/covid-19-updates-for-national-scenic-and-historic-trails/)



# Partnership for the National Trails System

## MISSION

To empower, inspire, and strengthen public and private partners to develop, preserve, promote, and sustain the National Scenic and Historic Trails.

## VISION

PNTS envisions a world-class system of National Scenic and Historic Trails that preserves natural and cultural values and provides recreational benefits for all.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of PNTS is to promote and support the efforts of National Scenic and Historic Trail organizations, to secure public and private resources, and to serve as a collective voice for policy and action that supports National Scenic and Historic Trails.

## National Trails Decade Goals

### 1 OUTREACH AND PUBLIC AWARENESS

Community engagement, education, and public awareness are truly prerequisites for both the protection and the capacity building of the National Trails System. The demand on our public lands and natural resources will only increase, and trails can play a major part in engaging individuals and communities with public treasures.

### 2 RESOURCE PROTECTION AND TRAIL COMPLETION

Although Congress has authorized 11 National Scenic and 19 National Historic Trails, only one—the Appalachian National Scenic Trail—is fully open for the use for which it is intended (an off-road footpath for hikers). This goal was devised to focus attention on these critical deficiencies and to accelerate efforts to “complete” the scenic and historic trails, which includes completing inventories of the natural and cultural resources, mapping of the routes of all National Scenic and Historic Trails, and on-the-ground trail work.

### 3 CAPACITY BUILDING

Capacity building intertwines people, systems, and partnerships. This goal is about providing the underlying resources and systems, including developing needed to make public visibility and engagement and conservation of land and heritage possible. Examples include hiring new staff and developing volunteer recruitment programs, board member trainings, and strategic plans.

\* These descriptions have been modified for space. View the full versions: [www.pnts.org/new/decade-for-the-national-trails-goals/](http://www.pnts.org/new/decade-for-the-national-trails-goals/)



**Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC)**



### Outreach

- **Education** — ATC hosted a new bimonthly virtual “Ed-Venture” series for young people, taught by environmental educators and partners. In northern Georgia, 19 NextGen Forest Ambassadors completed a series of virtual group sessions, covering topics including birding, tree identification, and the Cherokee language and stories.

### Protection

- **Grants** — ATC’s Wild East Action Fund, through the A.T. Landscape Partnership, awarded \$671,000 in ten land protection and twelve capacity building grants, leveraging nearly 55,000 acres of conserved lands.

### Capacity

- **Strategy** — ATC reorganized to establish an Advancement Team comprised of communications, membership, development, education, and outreach.

## Arizona Trail Association (ATA)



### Outreach

- **Engagement** — ATA initiated a Youth Ambassadors program with 12 teen participants. They hosted two Veterans Volunteer Work Weekends, and hosted four Trails Skills Institute courses to train and inspire trail stewards.

### Protection

- **Support** — ATA worked with land managers to secure Burned Area Emergency Response funding for emergency stabilization and supported the mineral withdrawal on the Coconino National Forest to protect the trail corridor from mining.

### Capacity

- **Staff** — Two Field Coordinators were hired to assist with volunteer event coordination. A Trail Technician was hired to support trail construction efforts and oversee conservation corps.



Photo Credit: Treven Hooker



Photo Credit: ATA

## Continental Divide Trail Coalition (CDTC)



Photo Credit: CDTC



### Outreach

- **Culture** — CDTC hosted Latino Conservation Week events that showcased diverse communities along the trail.
- **Community** — Helena, MT became the first State capital to be designated a Gateway Community on a national trail.

### Protection

- **Education** — CDTC released “Atlas of the CDT”, an exploration of the trail and its corridor through thematic maps, infographics, and narratives of the landscapes and communities the Continental Divide Trail connects.

Photo Credit: CDTC



Photo Credit: ATA

# NATIONAL SCENIC TRAILS

## Florida Trail Association (FTA)



### Outreach

- **Education** — FTA partnered with the Florida Department of State to develop educational resources, including a virtual reality interaction with artifacts for the Byrd Hammock archaeological site in St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge.

### Protection

- **Restoration** — FTA completed restoration of the Rice Creek suspension bridge.

### Capacity

- **Staff** — FTA hired its first Executive Director in over a decade.



Photo Credit: FTA

## Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail



### Protection

- **Rehabilitation** — Over 4 miles of the Old Natchez Trace in Tennessee were rehabilitated for pedestrian use by removing downed trees and standing timber. NPS funded the replacement of deteriorating structures along the Blackland Prairie and Yockanookany sections of the trail.
- **Development** — A contractor has been hired to design 34 bridges and 2,440 feet of boardwalk, to begin construction in 2022.



Photo Credit: NTPA

## Ice Age Trail Alliance (IATA)



### Outreach

- **Membership** — IATA's membership rose by 1,716 new members—an increase of 42% over 2019—for a current total of 5,560.

### Protection

- **Restoration** — Prairie Restoration on NPS property at Cross Plains, WI, converted a three-acre agricultural field from corn to oats in the spring to prairie seed in winter.



Photo Credit: Joe Ulmer

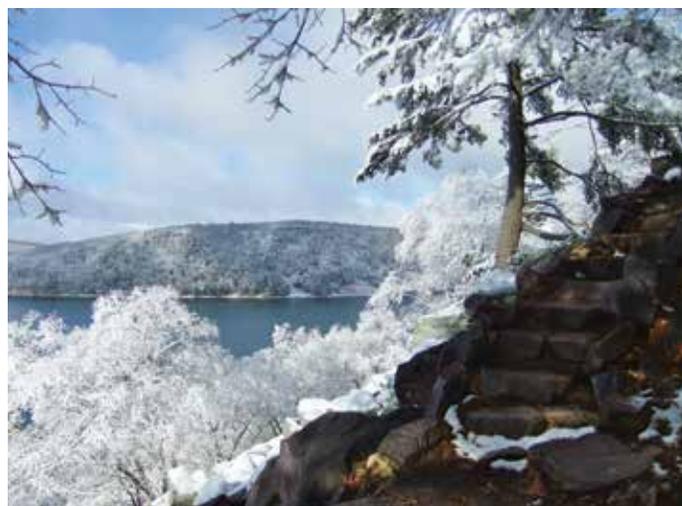


Photo Credit: Dave Caliebe

## Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC)



### Outreach

- **Website** — A new website was developed to include an interactive map, overnight site reservation system, thru-hiking page and other new features, amassing 23,000 visitors since its launch.

### Protection

- **Trails** — A new trailhead and community park at Mount Tom began development, which will provide new and safer access to the trail.

Photo Credit: Ryan Smith



Photo Credit: Clare Cain

## North Country Trail Association (NCTA)



### Outreach

- **Program** — Over 2,800 participants registered for NCTA's Hike 100 Challenge, a self guided challenge that encourages individuals to hike 100 miles on the North Country Trail in a calendar year.

### Protection

- **Land** — NCTA partnered with Pheasants Forever and Carlton County, MN to acquire a 242 acre property on the Minnesota-Wisconsin border, permanently protecting 1 mile of the trail.

### Capacity

- **Staff** — Five new staff members were added in 2020, including an Annual Events Coordinator, Data Entry Specialist, Member and Donor Relations Coordinator, and two new Regional Trail Coordinators to cover Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, and Vermont.



Photo Credit: Mary Stenberg

# NATIONAL SCENIC TRAILS

## Pacific Crest Trail Association (PCTA)



### Outreach

- **Virtual Training** — Monthly training sessions were offered by the PCTA for the new tabling program, COVID-19 safety protocols, and online versions of the “Trail Skills College Curriculum”—including “100 Intro to Trail Maintenance” and “101 Intro to Trail Scouting”.

### Protection

- **Realignment** — PCTA, in collaboration with the Eldorado National Forest and the Tahoe Rim Trail Association, completed the Echo Summit trail tread project which began in 2018. After a decade of effort between the PCTA and the Tahoe National Forest, with support from the American Conservation Experience trail crews, the 7-mile realignment of the Sierra Buttes trail was completed and opened for usage.

### Capacity

- **Staffing** — PCTA filled two new positions, a Salesforce Database Administrator and GIS Specialist.



Photo Credit: Connor Swift



Photo Credit: Megan Wargo

View more 2020 Trail Highlights from our Trail Organization and Federal Agency partners at the online Pathways archive:  
[www.pnts.org/new/category/pathways/](http://www.pnts.org/new/category/pathways/)



## Pacific Northwest Trail Association (PNTA)



### Outreach

- **Kiosks** — A new kiosk was installed near the trail’s midpoint, outside of Oroville, Washington. Another is planned for the Anacortes Community Forest Lands in the northern Puget Sound.

### Protection

- **Maintenance** — PNTA was at nearly 100% capacity at fielding trail crews and operating trail operations program for the season. The crews addressed deferred maintenance and wildfire damage.

### Capacity

- **COVID-19** — PNTA, with the help of an early season intern, created a 45 page COVID-19 Field Safety Manual that the organization used to maintain full operational capacity throughout the field season. The plan was used by nationwide agency partners, as well as local partners, to maintain productivity through PNTA coordination.



PNTA Photo Credit: Ryan Stoyer

### Protection

- **Studies** — PHTA, using a grant from REI, partnered with Prince William County to perform a feasibility study of a boardwalk at Powells Creek. NPS released a study declaring the feasibility of a trail to close the main Potomac Heritage Trail gap between Arlington & Loudoun Counties.



Photo Credit: PHTA

## REFLECTIONS

As PNTS looked back at 2020, we asked a few PNTS members and friends to share their reflections on the past year and how it affected their trail or their work.

### **by Elena Mederas, *Communications Support Specialist***

*Ice Age Trail Alliance*



One year ago, I was a National Trails System newbie. My investment in National Trails – like any hobby, passion, or even obsession – began with simple curiosity. Equipped with enthusiasm for outdoor recreation in my home State of Wisconsin and a general understanding of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail, I accepted an AmeriCorps VISTA position in outreach and

communications with the Ice Age Trail Alliance.

AmeriCorps service has helped me transform an amorphous interest in the Ice Age Trail into a professional experience at the nexus of communications, land conservation, and outdoor recreation; but other opportunities exist for delving into a personal or professional interest in the National Trails System.

One such opportunity is the PNTS Trail Apprentice Program (TAP). The TAP brings together a group of 18-28-year-olds who share an interest in the National Trails System. The 2020-2021 virtual cohort – of which I am honored to be a part of – includes 23 Trail aficionados.

Trail Apprentices are launched into the world of National Trails and connected to a robust network of National Trails System professionals. Through a series of workshops, we are offered the resources, tools, and guidance to work towards promoting equitable access to public lands and supporting the National Trails System through outreach, fundraising, and advocacy.

With the incredible increase in use and visibility of National Scenic and Historic Trails, programs like TAP are especially relevant for engaging new audiences with the National Trails System. This boost in public recognition is an exciting opportunity for those who support and appreciate public trails to welcome the next generation of Trail Apprentices, trail users, land stewards, and volunteers.

Given the opportunity, the next National Trails System newbie could—like me—turn their newfound interest into a personal and professional passion for public trails.

### **by Judy Bittner, *President***

*Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance*



Iditarod Dog Sled Race.

Awareness of the pandemic was in its infancy. The race started in Anchorage and Willow with the usual big crowds cheering on the mushers.

It ended in Nome with social distancing, cancelled banquets and memories of the 1918 flu epidemic that had devastated Alaskan rural

The big event on the Iditarod NHT that brings national and international attention to the Trail takes place the first two weeks in March – the 1,000 mile

communities 100 years ago.

Luckily, the COVID-19 virus stayed away and the race finished virus free.

The teachers in the Iditarod Trail to Every Classroom (iTREC!) class of 2019-2020 were very disappointed when the 3rd and final workshop to be held in Nome a few weeks after the finish of the Dog Sled Race, was cancelled.

The iTREC! sponsors – IHTA, Forest Service, BLM, and education specialist Delia Clark – quickly shifted gears and successfully converted to a zoom classroom format and iTREC!

### **by Teresa Martinez, *Executive Director***

*Continental Divide Trail Coalition*



As I write this, I am watching a cold front break across the upper Rio Grande Valley of New Mexico. The sun is shining bright and there are deep blue skies. The invisible wind is gusting, breaking the calm and peace you might expect from the glorious sun and sky, as it carries in a winter storm. We need the moisture the wind brings. The sun is still shining. The sky is still the bluest blue. It remains an absolutely beautiful day.

This is how I would describe 2020.

From all appearances it was full of opportunity and excitement for new work and directions. In February, CDTC represented the National Trails community by testifying at the U.S. House of Representatives Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies hearing on LWCF. In early March, we released our updated Strategic Plan. And within weeks of Covid-19 shutting down the world, we pivoted our signature event, CDT Trail Days, to a series of online events to virtually celebrate the CDT and reach tens of thousands more people than ever before.

While we had to cancel and suspend some activities, with some adaptation and quick work by our staff to restructure our programs for safe-Covid practices, we managed to have one of our best years yet.

We raised nearly \$600k in private dollars. We supported nearly 250 volunteers who contributed 14,000 volunteer hours. We grew our membership by 500 members. And our Board and staff remained healthy and creative in a near virtual year of work!

This work included the release of the Atlas of the CDT—a first of its kind review of the CDT from a landscape connectivity perspective. With the murder of George Floyd, CDTC made an even stronger commitment to create a more diverse, inclusive, just, and equitable Trail community. We leveraged our signature innovation and creativity in our work to remain stable and resilient during one of the more tumultuous years our generation has ever seen. But like the sun and blue skies, harboring the winds of an oncoming winter storm outside my living room window, while the year was full of chaos, it was also full of beauty and creativity and new initiatives and opportunities for the CDT and CDTC.

completed its training on schedule.

At the time, it was a huge challenge. We had little or no experience with virtual classrooms. By the end of 2020, iTREC's place-based, service-learning program had shifted to online learning.

Ten years of working together, a strong commitment to the program, an abundance of talent, and friendships guided the iTREC! partnership through the early days of pandemic chaos to a shift in practice and the development of quality online educational webinars for the iTREC! class of 2020-2021.

# PARTNERSHIP FOR THE NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM



## Outreach

- PNTS organized and led the 23rd "Hike the Hill" with the American Hiking Society (AHS). More than 100 representatives from 40 trail organizations, including PNTS Trail Apprentices and AHS Next Generation leaders participated in meetings with agency leaders and members of Congress.
- The PNTS JEDI Working Group continued to address and promote Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion issues, attitudes, policies, and programs within the National Trails community. Highlights of their work included the development of a best practices document as a resource for members as well as organizing trainings with talented facilitators, Lila Leatherman and Jose Gonzales.
- The PNTS Board of Directors released a Statement of Inclusion and a Statement of Solidarity.
- PNTS made available two resource lists on its website: COVID-19 Updates for National Scenic and Historic Trails and Diversity and Inclusion Resources, to help National Scenic and Historic Trails stay abreast on new information.

## Protection

- As part of the Land & Water Conservation Fund Coalition, PNTS successfully advocated for the inclusion of the National Trails System in Great America's Outdoors Act (GAOA). GAOA passed with bipartisan support, securing permanent funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund as well as deferred maintenance. GAOA requires annual appropriation of the \$900 million authorized for the LWCF and authorizes up to \$1.9 billion a year for five years to start fixing the maintenance backlog of facilities—including trails—within the National Parks, National Wildlife Refuges, National Forests, and Bureau of Land Management Districts.
- A GAOA Working Group formed to recommend a PNTS strategy for pursuing opportunities that could benefit the National Trails System as a result of the recent passing of GAOA.
- PNTS, in collaboration with FHWA and other partners, developed a "connectivity analysis" to identify gaps in trail protection. This GIS-based system will be available to members and partners in 2021.
- PNTS prepared a draft trail protection handbook, a draft status report on trail protection, and a series of case studies that illustrate how partners can work together to enhance public access and safety by providing permanent off-road routes for national trails. These new resources are expected to be available to the public in 2021 or 2022.
- PNTS published three case studies on trail protection featuring the Ala Kahakai Trail NHT, Captain John Smith Chesapeake NHT and the Ice Age NST.

## Capacity

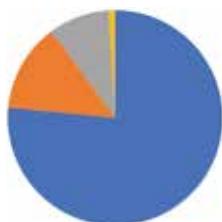
- PNTS moved its headquarters from Madison, WI to Washington DC in September 2020, bringing us geographically closer to many of our agency and nonprofit partners and legislators.
- After more than two decades of leadership Gary Werner retired as Executive Director of PNTS. During executive recruitment, Karen Crossley joined PNTS as Interim Executive Director and Kathy Decoster served as Interim Director of Advocacy and Policy.
- In late August 2020, PNTS welcomed its second ever Executive Director, Valerie Rupp.
- PNTS distributed the 3rd round of Trail Intern Grants, providing \$129,889 to trail organizations or agency offices to hire 13 interns for projects. Funds for this program were provided by the Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, and U.S. Forest Service.
- PNTS engaged 23 Trail Apprentices, its biggest cohort to date, and adapted the program to a virtual format featuring a variety of sessions focused on career exploration.
- In October, the Partnership hosted its first virtual workshop. In adapting to the new format, the workshop stretched over 9 days with 17 sessions covering the core themes: Advancing Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion; Expanding Partnerships Within and Beyond Trail Corridors; and Increasing Capacity Through Organizational Development.
- Recordings from Fall Workshop Sessions are publicly available on the Partnership website at [www.pnts.org/new/2020workshopdetailprogrampw/](http://www.pnts.org/new/2020workshopdetailprogrampw/)

# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Despite the uncertainties and challenges of 2020, the Partnership for the National Trails System received continued support from its Federal Agency partners, members, and a growing base of donors to continue to respond to National Trails System needs. This support provides important resources and forums for the 30+ member organizations that steward, promote, and program these scenic and historic treasures.

## 2019 Total Revenue

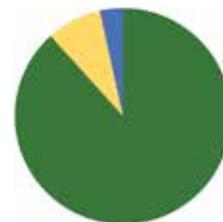
\$461,376



- Government Assistance
- Membership Dues
- Private Contributions
- Miscellaneous Income

## 2019 Total Expenses

\$428,666



- Program Services Expenses
- Management Expenses
- Fundraising Expenses

## 2020 MEMBERS

### Trail Organizations

Ala Kahakai Trail Association  
 Anza Trail Foundation  
 Appalachian Mountain Club  
 Appalachian Trail Conservancy  
 Arizona Trail Association  
 Camino Real de Tierra Adentro Trail  
 Connecticut Forest & Park Association  
 Continental Divide Trail Coalition  
 Continental Divide Trail Society  
 E Mau Na Ala Hele  
 El Camino Real de los Tejas NHT  
 Florida Trail Association, Inc.  
 Ice Age Trail Alliance  
 Iditarod National Historic Trail, Inc.  
 Lewis & Clark Trail Heritage Foundation  
 Lewis and Clark Trust, Inc  
 Mormon Trails Association  
 Natchez Trace Parkway Association  
 National Pony Express Association  
 Nez Perce Trail Foundation  
 North Country Trail Association

Old Spanish Trail Association  
 Oregon California Trails Association  
 Overmountain Victory Trail  
 Association  
 Pacific Crest Trail Association  
 Pacific Northwest Trail Association  
 Potomac Heritage Trail Association  
 Santa Fe Trail Association  
 Trail of Tears Association  
 Washington-Rochambeau Route  
 National Association

### Affiliate Members

American Discovery Trail Society  
 Back Country Horsemen of America  
 Carson Valley Trails Association  
 Mike Dawson  
 Kansas City Area Historic Trails  
 Association  
 National Frontier Trails Museum  
 National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance  
 Don Owen  
 Barton A Smith  
 Tahoe Rim Trail Association



Hike the Hill 2020 Photo Credit: Kathy DeCoster

## 2020 CONTRIBUTORS

### Benefactor of Trails

(\$5,000 - \$9,999)

Anonymous  
 Barney & Sandy Mann  
 National Park Foundation  
 Ron Tipton & Rita E Molyneaux  
 Gary Werner & Melanie Lord

### Caretaker of Trails

(\$2,500 - \$4,999)

Anonymous  
 Donald & Mildred Mann  
 Tides Foundation

### Protector of Trails

(\$1,000 - \$2,499)

Linda M. Cheney  
 William Dahnke & Ann Tiffany-Dahnke  
 Steve Elkinton  
 Sandra Marra  
 Charles & Sandra Merin  
 Linda Paik  
 Bill Sevald  
 Elizabeth Stewart  
 Tarma Designs

### Private Contributions

2018 \$22,749  
 2019 \$42,264  
 2020\* \$61,990

\*unaudited numbers

### Steward of Trails

(\$500 - \$999)

John P. Bloom  
 Katherine DeCoster  
 Don & Amy Owen Charitable Trust  
 of the Community Foundation for  
 Loudoun & Northern Fauquier  
 Counties  
 Dr. Reba Wells W. Grandrud  
 Reese F. & Melinda J. Lukei  
 Donald Ralphs  
 Barbara Schaefer

### Advocate for Trails

(\$250 - \$499)

Judith Bittner  
 Cosmo Catalano  
 Dr. & Mrs. Michael Chapple  
 Jason E. Dorgan & Lysianne M.  
 Unruh  
 Steven Gonzales  
 Margaret Gorski  
 Robert E. & Catherine D.  
 Hutchinson  
 Luke Klobberdanz  
 Shelley Mann-Lev  
 Teresa A. Martinez  
 James Muschett  
 Valerie Rupp & Nicholas Rudolph  
 Andy & Jaime Schmidt  
 Helen Scully  
 Ellen von Karajan  
 Michael Wollmer

### Trail Builder

(\$100 - \$249)

Lila Aamodt  
 R. G. Absher  
 Anonymous  
 Rod Bartlow  
 Liz Bergeron  
 Karen Crossley  
 Mike Dawson  
 Donald J. Dearborn  
 Eastern West Virginia  
 Community Foundation -  
 Owen Family Fund  
 John Hoffnagle  
 Kevin Keeler  
 Andrea Ketchmark  
 Jeff Kish  
 Sandra L. Kolakowski  
 Karen Lutz  
 James L. Mallory  
 Marjorie L. & Arthur P. Miller  
 Mayda Nathan  
 Kim Skinner  
 Jonathan Stephens  
 Rich Steward  
 Martha & Kevin Tansey  
 Jennifer Tripp  
 Greg & Nancy Warren  
 Kent Wimmer

### Supporter of Trails

(\$50 - \$99)

Craig Bromley  
 Kristina Cooper  
 Stephen Granata  
 Jack Haskel  
 Patrick Hearty  
 Julie Judkins  
 Joy Kinard  
 John Leinen  
 Margaret G. and Kurt A.  
 Liske  
 Bill Martin  
 Donald J. & Amy Owen  
 Kim & Pamela Owen  
 Dean Thomas Ross  
 Morgan Sommerville  
 State Farm Companies  
 Foundation  
 Elizabeth Thomas  
 Mark Weekley  
 Charlie Willard

### Donors

Amazon Smile  
 Derek Blount  
 Chris Brown  
 Robert Buchanan  
 Jan Hancock  
 Justin Kooyman  
 Scott Piddington  
 Robert Swick  
 Taylor Weixl  
 Elizabeth Wessel  
 Deloris Gray Wood

Join us in our mission to support a National Trails System for all.  
 Visit [www.pnts.org](http://www.pnts.org) today to become a member.

# NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAILS

## Ala Kahakai Trail Association (ATA) E Mau Nā Ala Hele (E Mau)



### Outreach

- **Programs** — During the pandemic, the ATA continued taking small groups of hikers along the trail in accordance with State restrictions for gatherings.

### Protection

- **Signs** — ATA maintained signs and replaced lost markers, with the help of the Department of Hawaiian Homelands, to protect a section of trail on DHHL lands in Kau.
- **Land** — ATA is in the process of closing on 1,300 acres at Kaunamano and working on acquiring an easement on 380 acres.

### Capacity

- **Board** — ATA welcomed two new members, increasing the board from 6 to 8.



Photo Credit: ATA



## Chesapeake Conservancy (CC)



### Outreach

- **Programs** — NPS launched the Werowocomoco Ancestral Lands Corps Individual Placement Program. This is a 26-week opportunity for American Indians, ages 18-35, to be involved with the future of park operations, preservation, and the visitor experience at Werowocomoco.

### Protection

- **Archeology** — NPS completed an Archeological Overview and Assessment of Werowocomoco—a residence of the Powhatan and the site of the first meetings between the Native leaders and the English colonists.

### Capacity

- **Staffing** — The position of Communications Associate was filled, to be shared by the Chesapeake Trail and the Chesapeake Conservancy, to handle internal communications, consistent messaging, monthly newsletters, social media, and other projects such as the preparation of materials for the Conservancy's board of directors.

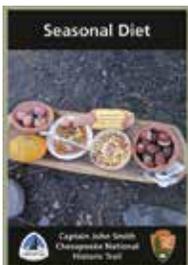


Photo Credits: NPS

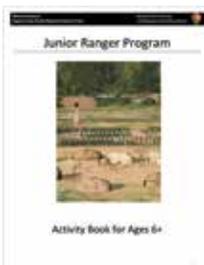


Photo Credit: Susquehanna National Heritage Area



## Camino Real de Tierra Adentro Trail Association (CARTA)



### Outreach

- **Input** — CARTA provided input and support for interpretive signs along a stretch of trail in El Paso County, TX. Trail enthusiasts provided input to the NPS's consultants on the overall interpretation plan. CARTA was recognized by New Mexico as a stakeholder for consultation regarding a proposed visitors' and interpretation center.

### Protection

- **Consultation** — NPS selected a firm to prepare a comprehensive interpretation plan for the El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro NHT, an act that affords the communities along the trail's route potential benefits vis-a-vis heritage tourism and recreation.



Photo Credit: NPS



Photo Credit: NPS

# NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAILS



## El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail Association (ELCAT)



### Outreach

- **Community** — EICaT’s Model Trail Communities (MTCs) hosted tables at the Floresville Community Market, created local trail maps, developed an “Adopt-A-Sign” program for trail signs, and created interpretive panels in multiple areas.

### Capacity

- **Expansion** — EICaT’s MTC Chapters vastly increased the capacity of the organization. In Milan County, MTC membership increases have allowed cataloging native plants with traditional uses in the area, and volunteers created a pamphlet describing the plants, their uses, and where they can be found on the trail. In Wilson County, MTC engagement led to the establishment of a Trail Committee by the City of Floresville, TX to address development on the trail.

### Protection

- **Research** — EICaT was approved to conduct a Community Activated Parks Proposal in order to conduct historical and archaeological research in Onion Creek Metro Park.

Photo Credit: Steven Gonzales



Photo Credit: Lynn Forney Young



## Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance (IHTA)



### Outreach

- **Education** — Iditarod Trail to Every Classroom (ITREC!), the place-based, service learning educational training for K-12 teachers, graduated its ninth class.

### Capacity

- **Funding** — IHTA continued a Challenge Cost Share Agreement with USFS to promote education and develop stewardship.



Photo Credit: Judith Bittner

### Protection

- **Rehabilitation** — IHTA provided a grant and volunteers to the Nome Kennel Club to rehabilitate the Topkok shelter cabin located 43 miles southeast of Nome, AK, along the Iditarod Trail between Safety and White Mountain.

Photo Credit: Nome Kennel Club



Photo Credit: Judith Bittner, IHTA

## Anza Trail Foundation (ATF) and partners



### Outreach

- **Website** — Anza Trail Foundation accelerated the modernization of Web de Anza, removing the website’s content from its out-of-date 1990’s software and designing a new website that meets 21st century standards for usability, accessibility, and interoperability.

### Capacity

- **Board** — ATF conducted a Board Skills and Needs Assessments, created a new Council of Advisors, revised its mission statement and adopted its work plan 2021-22 priorities.

### Protection

- **Accessibility** — La Expedicion de Anza, 1775 (LEA), an accessible cultural history park within the Santa Cruz River Park opened in Tucson, Arizona along the Anza NHT. This 1/4 mile long park adjacent to the Arizona School for the Deaf and Blind (ASDB) is accessible to people with hearing or vision loss and those with mobility challenges. LEA includes a new 1/8th mile trail with a Braille cable for way finding, a cloverleaf-shaped sensory garden bed with native plants that encourage touch and smell, and interactive audible stories. The multilingual park uses English, Spanish, Braille, and American Sign Language.



Photo Credit: Angel Breault



Photo Credit: Angel Breault

# NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAILS

## Outreach

- **Junior Rangers** — The first ever Trailwide Junior Ranger activity book was piloted at ten locations along the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail. The program allows children to complete educational activities—designed to engage participants where they are and to draw connections to trailwide themes—and earn a Junior Ranger Badge.

## Protection

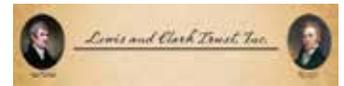
- **Historic Sites** — S.V.M. Historical Consultants were contracted to investigate upwards of 20 high potential historic sites along the eastern extension of the trail, from St. Louis to Pittsburgh.

## Capacity

- **Living History** — More than 90 participants tuned in for a Trail Talk webinar with living history actor and activist Hasan Davis, as he guided a conversation about York (the only African American member of the Lewis and Clark expedition team), Equity, Race, and the Lewis and Clark Story.



Lewis and Clark Trust, Inc. (LCT)



Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation (LCTHF)



Photo Credit: Karla Sigala



Photo Credit: Shannon Smith



Photo Credit: Karla Sigala

## Mormon Trails Association



## Protection

- **Inventory** — NPS initiated Cooperative Environmental Studies Unit agreement with Middle Tennessee State University to conduct a historic building inventory along the Mormon Pioneer NHT from Illinois to central Nebraska.
- **Exhibits** — NPS managed contract for 10 low-profile wayside and orientation exhibits to be placed along MOPI across Iowa.
- **Partnership** — NPS signed a four-northern trails partnership certification agreement with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for Martin's Cove: Mormon Trail Site in Alcova, WY.



Photo Credit: NPS

## Oregon-California Trails Association (OCTA)



## Outreach

- **Internet** — OCTA's intern created approximately 20 videos for its YouTube Channel to help increase outreach efforts. OCTA launched a new Trails Head website with interactive map of the Kansas City area.

## Protection

- **Legal** — OCTA won a lawsuit to stop a powerline project near Sutherland, Nebraska and continue to proceed with a lawsuit to stop the B2H powerline project along the Oregon Trail in eastern Oregon.



Photo Credit: NPS

## Capacity

- **Strategic Plan** — OCTA adopted a new 5-year plan in September that will seek to increase membership and fundraising efforts.

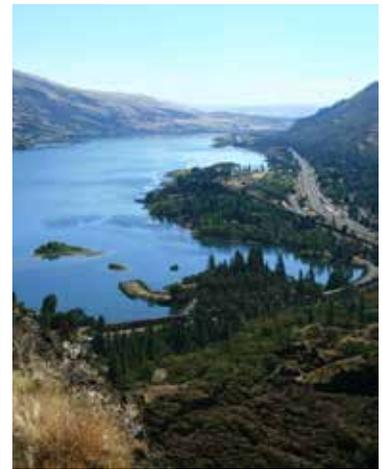


Photo Credit: NPS



Photo Credit: NPS

# NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAILS

## Nez Perce Trail Foundation (NPTF)



### Outreach

- **Programs** — NPTF participated in the Wreaths Across America Day event. The focus of the wreath laying ceremony was to recognize and remember the Nez Perce son of Captain William Clark known by the name of Haláx túuqit (Daytime Smoker/Capon Rouge).



Photo Credit: NPTF

## Overmountain Victory Trail Association (OVTA)

### Outreach

- **Program** — The story of the Overmountain Victory NHT was presented through a virtual program on social media through collaboration between OVTA, USFS, Southeast Region National Parks Sites, and the South Carolina State Parks.

### Protection

- **Development** — OVTA began construction of a new visitor center at Lake James State Park in North Carolina, including informational panels about the trail and access trails connecting it to the historic corridor. Three panels, telling the story of the OVNHT, were completed to overlook the historic route at the Yadkin Valley Heritage Center. Funds were raised for construction of a pathway between CADA Park OVNHT Trailhead in Chesnee, SC and Cowpens, NC.

### Capacity

- **Planning** — Master Plans for segments three and nine (out of ten) of the OVNHT were completed. A contract was established for development of a Master Plan for segment eight—resulting in trail projects underway in at least six of the trail’s segments.

## Old Spanish Trail Association (OSTA)



### Outreach

- **Media** — OSTA filmed video footage documenting segments of the longest waterless stretch of the trail at Emigration Pass and Resting Springs in the Mojave Desert. La Vereda del Norte Chapter, in a collaboration with the Colorado Rock Art Society, began video documenting significant parts of the trail that include Petroglyphs and Petrographs. The Nevada Chapter and PBS produced a documentary highlighting Nevada’s Old Spanish Trail section.



All Photo Credits: OSTA

### Protection

- **Signs** — Eight Old Spanish Trail highway signs have been installed in San Luis County, completing a much larger sign plan. Seventeen sign panels and interpretive signs at Fort Uncompahre will be completed by the North Branch Chapter.



Photo Credit: OVTA



Photo Credit: OVTA

Photo Credit: NPS



# NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAILS

## Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail



### Outreach

- **John Lewis** — Trail employees honored the life of Congressman John Lewis at Brown Chapel A.M.E. in Selma, AL. Followers paid their final respects before he made his way across the bridge one final time. Trail employees later participated in the final funeral life remembrance events in Atlanta, GA.

### Capacity

- **Facilities** — The trail opened its third interpretive center, in Montgomery at Alabama State University, to interpret the events that occurred in Montgomery during the voting rights campaign in March 1965. The facility opened briefly during the Selma to Montgomery Bloody Sunday Jubilee reenactment weekend.



Photo Credit: NPS



Photo Credit: NPS



## National Pony Express Association (NPEA)



Photo Credit: NPEA Colorado Division

### Outreach

- **Events** — Christmas Card Rides were put together for trail communities in Kansas and Wyoming, collecting cards and letters from Pony Express drop boxes and delivering them by horseback to the USPS.

### Protection

- **Signs** — New sign projects were finalized in the Tooele, Utah area. 140+ miles of trail signs from Ibapah, Utah to the Diamonds/Overland Pass area in Nevada were completed. A plan for signs for the rest of Nevada has begun development.

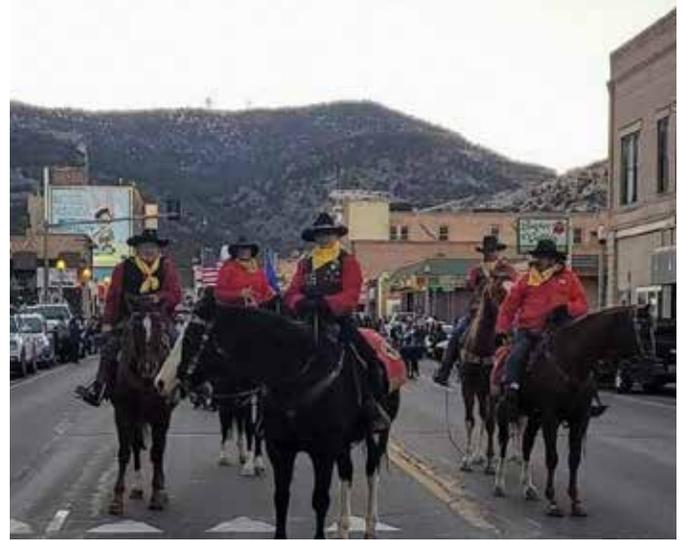


Photo Credit: Suzette Bradshaw

## Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail



### Outreach

- **History Partnerships** — NPS presented the “Invasion of Washington” in a 10-day Facebook program with the National Mall. A “Virtual Defenders Day” video series was created with Fort McHenry.
- **Media Partnership** — “Family Trip” trail sites were highlighted in a virtual program with Cool Progeny.
- **Sea Partnerships** — A “Trail Ambassador” program, offering free sails of families and underserved communities, began development with the Pride of Baltimore, Inc. A virtual interpretive program for the annual FSK Buoy Drop was presented with the Coast Guard.

### Protection

- **Preservation** — NPS worked to challenge plans for the expansion of a self-storage facility next to the former site of the Methodist Meeting House, a High Potential Historic Site in the Trail’s Comprehensive Management Plan.

### Capacity

- **Staffing** — Living Classrooms Foundation hired a trail intern for a four-month term. The intern worked on developing new outreach programs, improving social media communications, reviewing and updating website content, and assisting with the Trail Stewards Program. NPS hired Trail Manager, Kate Marks Hardy, who has been working to reengage partners, build social media outreach, and explore new programs to connect with new audiences.



Photo Credit: (cool) progeny



Photo Credit: U.S. Coast Guard

# NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAILS



## Santa Fe Trail Association (SFTA)



Photo Credit: SFTA Douglas County Chapter

### Outreach

- **Media** — SFTA began aerial filming of the trail through the Cottonwood Crossing Chapter area, sponsored a segment of “A Taste of History” from the Santa Fe Trail, and launched the “Santa Fe Trail Lives On!” Podcast.

### Capacity

- **Workshops** — SFTA held two workshops, with the National Trails Office, to focus on mutual projects including the Survey 1, 2, 3 app and the nomination of Santa Fe Trail sites as High Potential Sites and Segments.

### Protection

- **Signs** — SFTA submitted signs plans for sections of the trail and worked with Missouri and Kansas Departments of Transportation, resulting in an agreement to place trail signs on State rights-of-way.



Photo Credit: SFTA



Photo Credit: Maryland Veterans Museum at Patriot Park, W3R-MD.



## Trail of Tears Association (TOTA)



### Outreach

- **Website** — TOTA developed an internet hub regarding the forced removal of the Southern Tribes. The website provides a collection of research papers, including studies of extant witness structures, preservation guides, conference presentations, and links to other resources offering Trail of Tears related materials.

### Protection

- **Preservation** — TOTA supported efforts to preserve the Brown’s Ferry Tavern historic site.

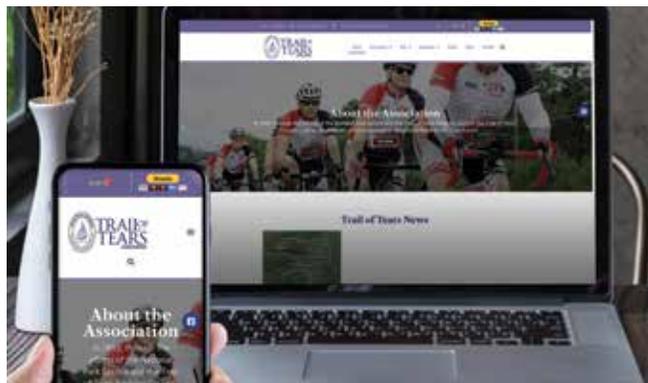


Photo Credit: Daryn Crawford



## National Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route Association, Inc. (W3R-US)

### Outreach

- **Program** — A grant from the National Park Foundation’s “Open Outdoors for Kids” program is being used to develop a teacher’s toolkit with curriculum materials for Title 1 schools. It will be implemented through a partnership with the American Revolution Consortium for Civic Education.

### Protection

- **Narrative** — W3R-US developed narrative descriptions for the total trail miles in each State along the trail to request inclusion in Comprehensive Management Plans of the State planning departments.

### Capacity

- **Membership** — The membership program is now based on a more inclusive approach to telling stories of all of the peoples involved in the Yorktown Campaign—no longer just the French and American military heroes—and the brochure has been translated into French.

## FEDERAL AGENCY PARTNERS

### Bureau of Land Management (BLM)



- **Trail Administration** — BLM administered the Iditarod NHT and co-administered, with the NPS, the Old Spanish and El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro NHTs.
- **Trail Management** — BLM managed significant portions of 18 National Scenic and Historic Trails on 6,000 miles of public lands in 15 States and 2,000 miles of trails under study and managed four major-trail related visitor centers in OR, NV, WY, and MT.
- **Budget and Performance** — FY20 National Scenic and Historic Trails Program received an increase in funding that was directed to accomplish the implementation of the NSHT Inventory, Assessment and Monitoring program, increased access/recreational opportunities, funded National Trails Visitor Center youth internships, and the completion of new trail portal and site sign projects.
- **National Scenic and Historic Trails Inventory, Assessment, and Monitoring Program** — The final BLM methodology and field guide for Inventory Assessment and Monitoring (IAM) was completed in early 2020. Staff presented associated introduction at the PNTS Workshop in October.
- **Partnerships** — BLM renewed the assistance agreement with PNTS for 5 more years!
- **Staffing** — Carin Farley was selected as the new BLM National Scenic and Historic Trails Program Lead and joined the National Conservation Lands Directorate in the new Reno, Nevada office in September.

### National Park Service (NPS)



- **Trail Administration** — NPS administered 23 National Scenic and Historic Trails, including two co-administered trails, spanning over 42,000 miles across 48 States, including the District of Columbia.
- **Funding** — Operational funding of \$14.4 million was provided in support of the National Trails System and NPS-administered national trails. NPS provided \$925,000 in Connect Trails to Parks competitive funding for projects that connect national trails to public lands and increase public awareness, appreciation, and use of the National Trails System.
- **National Recreation Trails** — NPS provided support to the Secretary of the Interior, who recognized 30 new national recreation trails in 25 States for inclusion as elements of the National Trails System. These new national recreation trails add more than 1,275 miles of land and water-based trails to this nationwide network of over 1,300 trails spanning all 50 States, including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.
- **Staffing** — NPS hired John Cannella as the full time National Program Manager for National Wild and Scenic Rivers System and National Trails System. Crystal Salvador-Zapote completed her 11-month Hispanic Access Foundation fellowship supporting the National Trails System.

### U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)

- **Trail Management** — The USGS nationwide public domain trails dataset was expanded by 83,000 miles of trails (258,000 total). The dataset improves trail data sharing and interoperability between Federal, State, and local organizations.
- **Technology** — Trail planning support tools were improved to encourage interagency collaboration and facilitates trail connectivity.
- **Communication** — USGS facilitated internal and external meetings, workshops, and presentations to discuss trail community needs and future direction.



### Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

- **Partnerships** — FHWA continued its cooperative agreement with PNTS to perform a two year gap analysis and corridor protection research project. An agreement was completed with BLM for a methodology to develop an inventory and monitoring program for trails. Cooperative agreements with American Trails for National Trails Training and with The Corps Network for youth workforce development continued.
- **Funding** — FHWA provided Federal-aid highway funds, especially through the Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside and the Recreational Trails Program, to eligible trail projects selected by the States.



- Samples funded or completed in 2020:
- Alaska funded two projects for the Iditarod NHT to brush and resurface trail sections, install trailhead and waypoint signs, and improve trail tread and drainage.
  - Alaska Trails and partners are creating a trail from Fairbanks to Seward—connecting communities and supporting jobs and businesses along the route.
  - Colorado funded the Continental Divide Trail Coalition to reroute a section of trail to eliminate erosion, trail braiding, and damage to alpine vegetation along the Monarch Crest Trail, part of the Continental Divide NST.
  - The Maine Appalachian Trail Club Ridge Runners were trained as Leave No Trace educators—to focus on youth groups and AT “thru-hikers”. They manage campsites, patrol alpine summits, teach hikers to minimize fire impacts, stay on durable surfaces, carry out trash, properly dispose of human waste, and promote AT guidelines and regulations.
  - North Dakota partnered with the Barnes County Soil Conservation District to develop a trailside facility along the North Country NST which now has a vault toilet and gravel parking area to increase available public services and accessibility.
  - Virginia funded a project with Prince William County for the Neabsco Creek Boardwalk to create a high-quality through trail to connect Neabsco Regional Park to Leesylvania State Park. This will be the primary connector between the two parks and serve as a connection in the Potomac Heritage NST network in Northern Virginia.

## FEDERAL AGENCY PARTNERS

### U.S. Forest Service (USFS)

- **Trail Administration** — USFS administered five NSTs (Pacific Crest, Pacific Northwest, Arizona, Continental Divide, and Florida), one NHT (Nez Perce), and managed portions of many others.
- **Maintenance** — USFS maintained approximately 5,000 miles of trail across the six NSHTs administered by the USFS in FY2020.
- **Trail Improvements** — USFS improved (i.e. altered, expanded, or constructed) approximately 80 miles of trail across the six USFS administered NSHTs in FY2020.
- **Volunteer Support** — Volunteers made significant trail maintenance contributions to the six NSHTs administered by the USFS in FY2020, as a total of approximately 155,000 volunteer hours were completed with an in-kind value of \$3,835,574.
- **Planning** — USFS made progress Nez Perce National Historic Trail, Pacific Northwest National Scenic Trail and Arizona National Scenic Trail's Comprehensive Management Plans.
- **National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act Implementation** — USFS continued to implement Trail Maintenance Priority Areas, including the entire Continental Divide National Scenic Trail and sections of other National Scenic and Historic Trails.
- **National Strategy for a Sustainable Trail System Implementation** — USFS launched the 10-Year Trail Shared Stewardship Challenge to focus our collective efforts to improve the sustainability of Forest Service trail systems and increase our collective capacity to manage and maintain trails.



### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### PNTS President:

Barney Mann

#### PNTS Vice President - Governance:

Luke Kloberdanz • Ice Age Trail Alliance

#### PNTS Vice President - Development:

John Hoffnagle • Pacific Crest Trail Association

#### PNTS Treasurer:

Kaleo Paik • Ala Kahakai Trail Association

#### PNTS Treasurer:

Liz Thomas • American Hiking Society

#### PNTS Trail Leaders Council Chair:

RG Absher • Overmountain Victory Trail Association

#### National Historic Trails Representative:

Steve Gonzales • El Camino Real de los Tejas Historic Trail Association

#### National Scenic Trails Representative:

Andrea Ketchmark • North Country Trail Association

#### At-Large Board Members:

Jim Muschett • Rizzoli International Publications

Kristin Murphy • Audubon Great Lakes

Ron Tipton

Sandi Marra • Appalachian Trail Conservancy

Tony Richardson • National Environmental Education Foundation

### TRAIL LEADERS COUNCIL

#### PNTS Trail Leaders Council Chair:

RG Absher • Overmountain Victory Trail Association

Ron Andersen • Mormon Pioneer Trail Association

Judy Bittner • Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance

Clare Cain • Connecticut Forest & Park Association (NET)

Sarah Cawley • Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation

Marcie Davis • E Mau Nā Ala Hele (Ala Kahakai NHT)

Ric Francke • Potomac Heritage Trail Association

Steven Gonzales • El Camino Real de los Tejas NHT

Association

Richard Waller • Old Spanish Trail Association

Deloris Gray Wood • Trail of Tears Association

Pat Hearty • National Pony Express Association

Andrea Ketchmark • North Country Trail Association

Jeff Kish • Pacific Northwest Trail Association

Justin Kooyman • Pacific Crest Trail Association

Bridget Likely • Appalachian Mountain Club (NET)

James Mallory • Lewis & Clark Trust Inc.

Bill Martin • Oregon-California Trails Association

Teresa Martinez • Continental Divide Trail Coalition

Matt Nelson • Arizona Trail Association

Kaleo Paik • Ala Kahakai Trail Association

Lou Ritten • Lewis and Clark Heritage Foundation

Susan Shingledecker • Chesapeake Conservancy

Morgan Sommerville • Appalachian Trail Conservancy

Elizabeth Stewart • Anza Trail Foundation

Tony Turnbow • Natchez Trace Parkway Association

Kelly Van Patten • Florida Trail Association

Ellen von Karajan • National Washington-Rochambeau

Revolutionary Route Association, Inc. (W3R-US)

Marcia Will-Clifton • Santa Fe Trail Association

Jim Wolf • Continental Divide Trail Society

Mike Wollmer • Ice Age Trail Alliance

Jim Zimmerman • Nez Perce Trail Foundation



#### Presentations and training sessions now publicly available, including:

- Videos of Recorded Workshop Sessions
- Downloadable Powerpoint Presentations
- Viewable Session Pre-Work and Take-Home Resources



Photo: Word cloud created by attendees asked to describe the workshop in a word or phrase.



View Workshop Sessions: [www.pnts.org/new/2020workshopdetailprogrampw/](http://www.pnts.org/new/2020workshopdetailprogrampw/)

## Gold Sheet

Compiled by the Partnership for the National Trails System, the annual "Gold Sheet" report summarizes the private dollars donated and hours of volunteer time contributed to build, interpret, and sustain the 30 National Scenic and Historic Trails. In 2020, despite the challenges of Covid-19, the nonprofit trail partners contributed **943,000** volunteer hours worth over \$25,000,000 toward the stewardship of our nation's public lands, ecosystems, and cultural heritage.



View and download the annual Gold Sheet: [www.pnts.org/new/our-work/reports/](http://www.pnts.org/new/our-work/reports/)



Pathways Across America  
 Partnership for the National Trails System  
 1615 M St. NW, 2nd Floor  
 Washington, D.C. 20036

[www.pnts.org](http://www.pnts.org)

PRSR STD  
 US POSTAGE PAID  
 MADISON WI  
 PERMIT NO. 531

## Event Calendar



[www.pnts.org/new/events/](http://www.pnts.org/new/events/)

March 8 - 26, 2021	Hike the Hill	Virtual	<a href="http://pnts.org/new/our-work/hike-the-hill/">pnts.org/new/our-work/hike-the-hill/</a>
March 22-23, 2021	Pennsylvania Association of Environmental Educators Conference	Virtual	<a href="http://pae.net/paee-conference.html">pae.net/paee-conference.html</a>
April 12 - 15, 2021	River Management Symposium	Virtual	<a href="http://river-management.org/symposium">river-management.org/symposium</a>
Nov 8 - 10 2021	National Outdoor Recreation Conference	Virtual	<a href="http://recpro.org/2021-conference">recpro.org/2021-conference</a>
Feb 22 - 27 2022	International Trails Symposium	Reno, NV	<a href="http://americantrails.org/symposium">americantrails.org/symposium</a>

## Connect



**Facebook and Twitter:**  
 @PartnershipNTS



**Pathways and e-News:**  
 communication@pnts.org



**Instagram:**  
 @nationaltrailssystem



**Webinar Topics:**  
 admin@pnts.org